

**Security Council**

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**Status of implementation of Security Council
resolution 2451 (2018)****Report of the Secretary-General****I. Introduction**

1. On 21 December 2018, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2451 (2018), in which it endorsed the agreements reached by the Government of Yemen and the Houthis on the city and governorate of Hudaydah and the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa; an executive mechanism on activating the prisoner exchange agreement; and a statement of understanding on Ta'izz.
2. The agreement on the city of Hudaydah and ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa includes an immediate ceasefire covering Hudaydah governorate and the mutual redeployment of forces from the city and the three ports to agreed locations outside the city and the ports within 21 days of the ceasefire entering into force; a commitment not to bring any military reinforcements into the city, the three ports and the governorate; and a commitment to remove any military manifestations from the city.
3. In line with the request of the parties, the Security Council, in resolution 2451 (2018), also authorized the Secretary-General to establish and deploy, for an initial period of 30 days from the date of adoption of the resolution, an advance team to monitor, support and facilitate the immediate implementation of the Stockholm Agreement. It also mandated the United Nations to chair the Redeployment Coordination Committee, charged with overseeing the ceasefire and the redeployment of forces.
4. The present note is submitted pursuant to paragraph 7 of Security Council resolution 2451 (2018), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report on progress regarding implementation of the resolution, including any breaches of commitments by the parties, on a weekly basis, as called for by the parties, until further notice. The present report covers the period from 21 to 28 December 2018.

II. Deployment of advance team

5. The Secretariat has established an inter-agency planning group to provide rapid support for the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement. The group is chaired by the Department of Political Affairs and composed of relevant United Nations entities



from across the Organization. The group has met regularly to make available the package of support necessary for the implementation of the Agreement on the ground.

6. The Secretary-General appointed retired Major-General Patrick Cammaert of the Netherlands as the Chair of the Redeployment Coordination Committee, as stipulated in the agreement on the city of Hudaydah and the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa.

7. At the request of the Special Envoy for Yemen, the two parties to the Agreement appointed three representatives each to the Redeployment Coordination Committee. On 22 December, the Committee Chair arrived in Yemen with an advance team and immediately began consultations with the parties. Mr. Cammaert met with the Government of Yemen Committee members in Aden on that day. On 23 December, he met with the Houthi members of the Committee in Sana'a. Mr. Cammaert and the advance team used these initial meetings with the parties to recall the obligations set by the Stockholm Agreement and the objective of the Committee, namely to ensure adherence to the ceasefire, alleviate the humanitarian situation and redeploy forces. Both parties welcomed United Nations support and facilitation for the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement and pledged full cooperation with the Committee Chair and with the United Nations more broadly.

8. On 23 December, Mr. Cammaert and the advance team, currently composed of 16 international monitors, arrived in Hudaydah city, where they are now installed and are assessing and defining the scope of United Nations support for the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement. On 24 December, the advance team met with the authorities in Hudaydah, visited its port and familiarized themselves with the operating environment within the city, including the blocked eastern and southern routes into and out of the city.

9. In parallel, the Committee Chair has engaged in a sustained manner with both parties, in person and via telephone, to build trust and confidence and to push for the convening of the first joint meeting of the Committee in Hudaydah, or its immediate vicinity, as soon as possible. Following intense consultations with the parties to identify a suitable and secure location, both parties made commitments to ensure the safety and security of the Committee members and United Nations advance team and the coordinated clearance of mines for the travel of Government of Yemen representatives to the appointed venue. The first joint meeting of the Committee took place on 26 and 27 December in Hudaydah city.

10. The Committee Chair set the tone for the meeting by urging the parties to leave the past behind and look towards the future. After positive discussions on draft terms of reference for the Committee and its operations, the parties discussed immediate confidence-building measures that could be put in place to sustain momentum and goodwill. In this vein, the Chair tasked the Committee representatives with presenting creative options regarding how to reopen the main transport routes to facilitate humanitarian access and civilian movements into and out of Hudaydah city. Following constructive discussions, the parties agreed to reopen the Hudaydah-Sana'a road to create a humanitarian corridor. They have also, in principle, agreed to a phased reopening of several other blocked routes. The first convoy with humanitarian aid is slated to leave Hudaydah port on 29 December at 10 a.m.

III. Situation in the city of Hudaydah and the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa

A. Monitoring of the ceasefire in Hudaydah

11. Once fully operationalized, the Committee will oversee the implementation of the ceasefire. It will also work to prevent a recurrence of clashes and initiate necessary de-escalation measures, where required.

12. Meanwhile, since the ceasefire entered into force on 18 December 2018, there has been a gradual decrease in hostilities and the fragile truce has held, although sporadic shooting continues. Both parties continue to make allegations against the other of provoking hostilities, as well as redeploying and reinforcing their respective forces. Both parties have used media outlets to transmit accusations regarding ceasefire violations. Notwithstanding the media claims and incidents on the ground, the assessment of the United Nations is that both sides have largely adhered to the ceasefire.

B. Redeployment of forces

13. A two-phased redeployment of forces is envisioned to enable immediate critical access to humanitarian facilities. The Committee is in the process of discussing the topic of redeployment, which will include time frames, locations and units for redeployment and modalities for verification and monitoring, as set forth in the Stockholm Agreement.

C. Strengthened United Nations presence

14. The proposal of the World Food Programme (WFP) regarding the management of the ports is pending agreement of the relevant Yemeni authorities. As part of that proposal, WFP intends to deploy United Nations port management experts to the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa in order to support the Yemen Red Sea Ports Corporation. The proposal also envisages the deployment of a Chief Executive Officer, who will oversee all port management-related matters and will decide on operational matters in consultation with the Chair of the Yemen Red Sea Ports Corporation, as appropriate.

15. Following the adoption of resolution 2451 (2018), the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen is enhancing operations to monitor inspections of commercial cargo at the ports of Hudaydah, Salif and Ra's Isa. In the immediate term, the Mechanism will deploy staff and monitors to the three ports, while in the longer term, the Mechanism will increase the inspection capacity at the ports with mobile and hull scanners. Until the deployment of personnel and equipment to the ports, the Mechanism will continue to monitor inspections in Djibouti and other regional ports.

16. Pending agreement by the parties, the United Nations will deploy accountancy experts to work with customs at the ports and with the Yemen Red Sea Ports Corporation to ensure that all revenues, including customs revenues and port fees, are properly accounted for and deposited in the Hudaydah branch of the Central Bank of Yemen or other accounts, as agreed to by the parties. The parties have not yet reached agreement on the operationalization of the financial arrangements and remain in disagreement on a number of related issues, including on the role of the United Nations. The United Nations Development Programme remains prepared to support,

if so requested, the channelling of revenues from the ports to the Central Bank in support of the Agreement.

IV. Humanitarian situation and access

17. Since the adoption of resolution 2451 (2018), the overall humanitarian situation has not changed. The front line that crosses the main Hudaydah-Sana'a road prevents access to five United Nations warehouses and the Red Sea Mills, where there is enough wheat to feed 3.5 million people for a month. While the Hudaydah-Hajjah road – the only route into and out of Hudaydah city – remains open, other main arteries remain closed, including the coastal road, the airport road, route 60 and the Hudaydah-Taiz road.

18. The Aden container terminal remains congested, which is a challenge to humanitarian operations. A humanitarian organization has had around 1,000 containers in the Aden container terminal for several months and has incurred \$2 million in port storage and container demurrage fees.

19. Bureaucratic impediments to humanitarian access have remained since the adoption of resolution 2451 (2018), including entry permits for 18 United Nations personnel pending approval with the Houthis.

20. Hudaydah and Salif ports remain open and operational. Ra's Isa port remains closed, as has been the case since June 2017. Bureaucratic impediments to fuel imports remain, despite the lifting of restrictions on food imports. On 23 December 2018, one commercial vessel carrying fuel was denied entry to Hudaydah port owing to regulations associated with Government of Yemen Decree 75 of 2018, despite having been inspected on 23 December and issued a clearance certificate by the Mechanism.

21. Since the adoption of resolution 2451 (2018), the Mechanism has monitored three inspections in the territorial waters of Djibouti: one on 23 December 2018 and two on 26 December 2018. All have been issued Mechanism clearance certificates. Separately, two vessels, one containing fuel and one food, offloaded at Hudaydah port, and one food vessel offloaded at Salif port. As at 26 December 2018, there were five vessels at Hudaydah and one at Salif offloading cargo.

22. Despite the increase in the value of the Yemeni rial over the past two months, purchasing power remains low and prices of key commodities, including food, fuel and medicine, remain high. The national income of Yemen is half of what it was prior to March 2015. Since 21 December 2018, the exchange rate of the Yemeni rial has risen slightly from 500 to 525 Yemeni rials per United States dollar.

V. Prisoner exchange

23. To implement the prisoner exchange agreement, a supervisory committee was agreed upon in Sweden and is composed of the parties, the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen and the International Committee of the Red Cross. On 22 December, the supervisory committee held separate meetings with the two parties: one in Sana'a and the other via telephone. The prisoner exchange agreement stipulates the simultaneous release and exchange of detainees following specific steps to be taken by the parties. On 25 December, both parties submitted to the Office of the Special Envoy their preliminary responses regarding the lists each party had received from its counterpart through the Office of the Special Envoy in Stockholm.

VI. Situation in Ta'izz

24. During the reporting period, both parties submitted to the Office of the Special Envoy their respective lists of members for the joint committee, as set forth in the statement of understanding on Ta'izz. The Office of the Special Envoy plans to convene the first joint meeting of the joint committee in an agreed-upon location in early January 2019.

VII. Observations

25. The willingness of the parties to adhere to their commitments and cooperate with the United Nations are key to the full implementation of the Stockholm Agreement. The parties have thus far been generally cooperative with the United Nations and have facilitated the deployment of Mr. Cammaert and the advance team. Both parties have also demonstrated goodwill to ensure the start-up of the Committee, including by undertaking demining activities and providing security guarantees to facilitate the travel of the representatives of the Government of Yemen, along with the Committee Chair and the advance team, to take part in the first meeting of the joint committee in Hudaydah.

26. I urge the parties to continue in this spirit of cooperation. The timely issuance of visas and other administrative approvals for required equipment are critical for the additional deployment of United Nations personnel to support the full implementation of the Stockholm Agreement. This will, in turn, create a positive atmosphere conducive to the next steps facilitated by the United Nations aimed at ending the conflict. I also urge the parties to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel and assets at all times.

27. The support of the Security Council remains critical to the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement and the ongoing efforts of my Special Envoy to continue the political process that was launched in Sweden. A negotiated political settlement remains the only path towards an end to the conflict in Yemen. I call on all Member States to fully support the role of the United Nations, including the efforts led by Mr. Cammaert on the ground in Hudaydah. The dire humanitarian situation in Yemen and the devastating toll of the conflict on civilians demand nothing less from us.